Amateur Radio Newsline™ Report 1395 May 7, 2004

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1395 with a release date of Friday, May 7, 2004 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The FCC denies a request for more time to respond on BPL, the NTIA report on BPL explained and ham radio will honor the military. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1395 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: FCC REFUSES TO EXTEND COMMENT CUTOFF ON BPL

The FCC has issued a ruling denying a request from the ARRL to extend the Commentary cutoff date on the introduction of BPL as outlined in ET Docket 04-37.

The ARRL had asked the Commission to extend the deadline for Comments and Reply Comments by 45 days in the Broadband over Power Line Notice of Proposed Rule Making. The League had argued that this would give it and others the time required for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to conclude its study at BPL, issue an initial report and give commenters time to evaluate it.

In its April 30th release denying the request the FCC gave no overriding reason for turning it down. Instead the agency said that the now past May 3rd commentary cutoff date stands. It added that those wanting to address the issues raised in the NTIA report can do so during the Reply Comment period. That's open now and ends on June 1st. (ARNewsline(tm))

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THE BPL FIGHT: NTIA RELEASES LONG AWAITED REPORT ON BPL

Meantime, as reported last week, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration has issued its long-awaited report on the interference potential of BPL. Amateur Radio Newsline's Mark Abramwicz, NT3V, is here with an in-depth look at the report and the affect it might of on the introduction of BPL technology:

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The very title: "NTIA Report Lays Groundwork for Responsible Deployment of Broadband Over Power Lines" doesn't sound encouraging.

But like any package - or the glowing press release that accompanied it - the more than 100-page document contains so much more once you open it.

And, you don't have to go beyond the executive summary that accompanies the report to find the glowing praise by Acting NTIA Administrator Michael Gallagher in the press release is quickly muted. Muted by the facts and some disturbing interference problems the agency's own technical review identified.

CQ Magazine Editor Rich Moseson, W2VU, digested and analyzed the NTIA report and agreed to share his findings with the Amateur Radio Newsline audience.

"It is one of the first really objective looks at the real danger of interference caused by BPL," Moseson says. "As of objective as studies by the ARRL might be, they would be perceived as someone with a certain interest here.

"The NTIA is a federal agency and their engineering study should carry a lot of weight with the FCC."

Moseson says he identified five major conclusions. First, among them, that the methods currently used to measure noise levels and interference potential are not adequate, according to the NTIA. Essentially, he says, there's an underestimation of peak-field strength. And, peak field strength is the leading contributor to high-interference risks.

"As applied in current practice to BPL systems, Part 15 measurement guidelines do not address unique physical and electromagnetic characteristics of BPL-radiated emissions," Moseson says. "That's a quote. That's pretty significant that the Part 15 guidelines do not address the unique physical and electromagnetic characteristics of BPL emissions. So the measurement system being used is not right."

Second, he says the NTIA engineers said noise levels must be measured from power lines carrying BPL as well as the device that couples the signal to the power lines.

"What the NTIA is saying here is that you can be 100 feet down the street from the actual coupling device or up to 300 feet down the

street and if the signal bumps into one of these corroded connecters or something, then, it's going to start radiating there," Moseson says. "And you have to measure all along the line as well as at the coupling device."

Third, Moseson says NTIA found interference to weak- or medium-strength signals is likely to affect aircraft operation and the navigational frequencies used by aircraft.

"Interference to aircraft reception of moderate to strong radio signals is likely to occur below 6 kilometers altitude - that's 20,000 feet - within 12 kilometer center of the BPL deployment," says Moseson, quoting from the report. "Interference would likely occur to aircraft reception of weak to moderate signals within 40 miles of the center of the BPL deployment area."

NTIA's fourth major conclusion, according to Moseson, is that results of BPL tests and implementation in other countries has met with mixed results. And, in some cases, it has been shut down entirely. He cites an example:

"During an emergency exercise of the Austrian Red Cross in May 2003, communication was massively disturbed - that's their words - by BPL with interference levels exceeding the limits by a factor of 10,000," Moseson says.

The fifth NTIA conclusion identified by Moseson is the agency's desire to conduct more testing.

"They proposed some more stringent measurement standards and procedures along with some of the interference mitigation techniques that were mentioned in the FCC's Proposed Rulemaking and others that weren't," Moseson says. "But they're saying here that they're not even sure that those are going to work. They want to do more testing on them and report on it later in the year."

The bottom line: Will the FCC's commissioner take seriously the findings and red flags raised by the NTIA report?

"In this case, I'm not really sure because they seem to have made up their minds going into this as to what they were planning to do," Moseson says. "So, I am not as optimistic as I might be in other rulemaking proceedings."

So, how soon could the FCC act? Moseson says he wouldn't even begin to speculate.

"At this point the comment period is closed. Comments closed on May 3," Moseson says. "There's a two-week reply comment period. And, then it's up to the commission of what they're going to do and when they're going to do it.

"There is no requirement that the FCC issue a ruling in a given amount of time after the close of comments on a proceeding. So, they very well could wait until the NTIA issues its second report. And, I'm sure that it would be accepted into the record as coming from another federal agency."

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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The full report may be downloaded, either in full or chapter by chapter, from the NTIA website. Its in cyberspace at www.ntia.doc.gov/new.html (ARNewsline(tm))

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RADIO LAW: LEGALIZING AMBER ALERTS ON THE HAM BANDS

Hams worried that they might get into trouble if they relay lost child or AMBER alerts on the air may soon have regulatory relief. This as wording in an omnibus 71-page, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on a variety of ham radio issues issued in mid-April tackles the problem had on.

One of the proposals in the April 15th NPRM proposes to and we quote: "clarify that amateur stations may at all times and on all channels … make transmissions … which may be instrumental in saving human life and property." In other words, if enacted as proposed, retransmitting AMBER Alerts and just about any other type of live saving communications would become legal under Federal law.

The proposal is part of FCC WT Docket 04-140. The Comment deadline is June 15th. (CQ)

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Break 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W0EF repeater sereving Minneapolis Minnesota.

(5 sec pause here)

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RESCUE RADIO: YOUNG HAM TRIES TO GET AID FOR DROWNING VICTIM

A tragic story from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park near Townsend, Tennessee. That's where a youngster on a field trip drowned at Cades Cove while a classmate with a hand held 2 meter transceiver tried to get help to save him. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, reports:

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It started about an hour after the group arrived at the campsite on Friday, April 30th. According to news reports, a group of people including the ill fated teen took to the water. In a short time, the victum, identified only as Chris found himself in trouble. Others tried to save him while teachers using cell phones tried to call for help.

When it was found that there was no cell phone coverage, another student, Jordan Webb, KI4AVG, said he would try ham radio. Jordan had brought along his two meter hand held radio. He found a near-by high location and called for help over the Knoxville area WB4GBI repeater. He was answered by Jim Bond, K6SPY, who notified Park Rangers. Unfortunately they didn't arrive in time to save the victum, but because KI4AVG had the foresight to bring along his 2 meter talkie, his classmate's body was recovered within hours, instead of days.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, reporting.

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Jordan Webb, KI4AVG is only thirteen year old and attends the Vine Middle School in Knoxville. He has been a ham for just about a year and serves as net control for the weekly Young Amateur Radio Net on the Radio Amateur Club of Knoxville W4BBB repeater. (K4PZT, KG4UJC, KG4YTT, WBIR.com)

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ENFORCEMENT: NET INTERFERENCE FOUND

Authorities in the United Kingdom were quick to act when a propagation net became the target of a jammer. We have more in this report:

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Listeners to the DK0WCY Solar Geomagnetic Information broadcast on 75 meters recently experienced interference from an unmodulated carrier on the channel. The interference, which appeared to be deliberate jamming, was reported by the DK0WCY team to the authorities in Germany who founf that the interference was coming from from the United Kingdom.

With support from the Radio Society of Great Britain's Amateur Radio Observation Service and other U-K hams, authorities traced the interference to an amateur station in the Chepstow area. The interference ceased abruptly at 0608UTC on the 25th of March. No explanation was given but it is assumed that government regulators took the station off the air.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP.

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No word on who the jammer was or what punitive action will be taken by U-K telecommunications authorities. (GB2RS)

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ENFORCEMENT: YOU BETTER STAY OFF THE RADIO

Back here in the U-S-A, the FCC says that a former ham who has been to jail for operating without a license is back on the air and still has no FCC authorization to be there. Again, the FCC's Daryl Duckworth, NN0W:

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Duckworth: "Richard A. Burton of Harbor City, California, has been sent a Warning Notice of unlicensed radio operation on 2 meters in the Los Angeles area. Mr. Burton has been convicted in 1984, 1990, 1993 and 2000 of unlicensed radio operation under Section 301 of the Communications Act of 1934, as ammernded, and has served time."

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According to Duckworth, the Notice sent to Burton states that additional instances will lead to -- and we quote -- to the same result. The FCC has also designated for hearing a second General Mobile Radio Service application that Burton had filed with the agency. (FCC, RAIN)

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ENFORCEMENT: CRANK CALL TO CUBA'S CASTRO LEADS TO $4000 FINE

The FCC says that a Florida radio station should be fined $4000. This, for permitting the hosts of the Morning High Jinks show placed a crank-called to Cuban President Fidel Castro and broadcast the recording.

As previously reported, Joe Ferrero and Enrique Santos of WXJD FM used snippets of an earlier prank call involving Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez get past a Castro receptionist and up the chain of command in a five-minute broadcast June 17th of last year. They then fed pleasantries to Castro before breaking in and calling him an assassin.

On April 28th the FCC concluded that the station should be forced to pay a fine for the broadcast. The agency rejected claims that a rule requiring people to be notified before their voices are used on the air does not apply to people in Cuba.

WXJD was given the usual 30 days to pay the fine or to file a further appeal. (Published reports)

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RADIO RECORDS: XL TO UA ON 137 KHZ

Hams in New Zealand and Asiatic Russia have claimed a new world low-frequency distance record. ZM2E at Quartz Hill near Wellington and

UA0LE near Vladivostok say that they completed a two-way contact the night of the 20th of March on 137.70kHz. The path length is estimated to be 10,311 kilometers or 6392 miles. (Q-News, GB2RS)

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AWARDS: YCCC OFFERS SUBSIDY AWARD PROGRAM

The 400 member Yankee Clipper Contest Club has announced that it's First Annual DXpedition Award Program has been funded for the 2004 through 2005 contesting season. The purpose of the program is to encourage new as well as young amateurs to participate in contesting.

As part of the award program, the Yankee Clipper group will award the winning applicant up to $1,500 to accompany a YCCC authorized Dxpedition and / or Contesting operation any where in the world for up to one week, to operate in one of the four major contests.

This a first time program for the club. The winner will be chosen and announced at the Boxboro Hamfest in August and there are some restrictions on who can apply. More information is on line at www.yccc.org or by e-mail to W1LLU@verizon.net (W1LLU)

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THE SOCIAL CIRCUIT: MARC HAMFEST AND COMPUTER FAIR

Turning to the ham radio social scene, the Mid-Atlantic Amateur Radio Club will be presenting their annual Valley Forge Hamfest and Computer Fair, Sunday, July 11th. The venue is the Kimberton Pennsylvania Fire Company Fairgrounds on Route 113. Admission is $6.00 for hams. Unlicensed spouse and children of licensed amateur radio operator will be admitted free of charge. For additional hamfest information, please e-mail MARC at Hamfest-info@marc-radio.org. Information is also available on the club website at www.marc-radio.org. (Via e-mail)

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HAMVENTION 2004: THE ARRL PUBLIC RELATIONS FORUM

The ARRL sponsored Public Relations Forum at the 2004 Dayton Hamvention will be held at 8:30 A-M on Sunday morning, May 16th. The venue is Meeting Room 1 at the Hara Arena and those planning it say that this will be a do not miss event for anyone interested in promoting the hobby.

What will be discussed you ask? Well the major items include public service, spectrum protection and of coarse Broadbnd Over Powerline internet access. The session will also explain how to tell the world outside the hobby about Amateur Radio and how to address our concerns to public officials and local media.

Again, that's Sunday, May 16th at 8:30 in the morning for the ARRL Public Relations Fourm at Hamvention 2004. We will see you there. (Dayton Hamvention(r))

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HAMVENTION 2004: A NICE PLACE TO LAND

And if you are a private pilot planning to fly your own plane to next weeks Dayton Hamvention, the events planners have a tip for you. Consider landing and tie-down at Greene County Airport in the near-by town of Xenia.

That field is located just south of Route 35 approximately 7 miles east of Dayton and is the closest airport to downtown. Its also among the easiest to get in and out of using small aircraft. Fuel prices are reportedly some of the lowest in the area, and the facility is well kept and capable of handling quite a bit of traffic.

Green County is just one of many airports catering to pilots of small aircraft in the Dayton area. More information about it is on-line at www.gwaohio.co. (Dayton Hamvention(r))

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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WITH NEWSLINE: MORE THANK-YOU'S FROM N6TCQ

Ladies and gentlemen, here is Amateur Radio Newsline's Support Fund Administrator, Andy Jarema, N6TCQ.

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Still playing "catch-up" for our supporters, in the month of July last year
we heard from:

The Raleigh, NC Amateur Radio Society, The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Amateur Radio Society, The Garland, TX ARC, Monthly contributor William Walters, WA2IBM, of San Jose, CA; Monthly contributor Scott Hensley of the Area Communications Team, also in San Jose and Brad Berryhill, WA6JJB of Anaheim Hills

Thank you to everyone, and we promise to do our best to continue to earn your care and support. A reminder that Newsline is a 501c 3 California non-profit corporation. FCC regulations prohibit us from telling you exactly how to support us, but that information is on our website at
www.arnewsline.org. That address will be repeated at the end of the newscast. I'm Andy Jarema, N6TCQ.

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Thank you Andy. (ARNewsline(tm))

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: SPAM LOWERING LEGIT E-MAIL

Meantime, a recent survey finds that Americans are e-mailing less and trusting e-mail less because of the growing flood of junk messages. According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 29% of e-mail users have reduced their overall use of the medium while 63% of e-mail users say they are less trusting of e-mail overall because of spam. That's up from 52 percent in June of 2002. (Technology OnLibe)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: SCIENTIST TO BE NEXT SPACE TOURIST

The next space tourist plans to spend his time on-orbit studying environmental issues. Gregory Olsen, the founder of Sensors Unlimited Inc. in Princeton, New Jersey says that he plans to bring along infrared sensors, which detect varying levels of heat, to analyze pollution in the Earth's atmosphere and the health of agricultural systems on the ground.

Olsen told a recent news conference that he hopes to inspire young people with his mission, and want to arrange a video teleconference with Trenton High School in New Jersey and a school at the Crow Indian Reservation in Montana.

The 58-year-old Olsen has hired Space Adventures to get him to the I-S-S. This is the same company that brokered the first space tourist trip of millionaire Dennis Tito's flight aboard a Russian spacecraft in 2001. Olson's eight-day voyage to Earth orbit is currently scheduled for April of 2005. As with all past space station visitors, Olson is expected to be trained in Amateur Radio and operation of the ham gear aboard the I-S-S as well. (Published reports)

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WORLDBEAT: NEW RADIO RULES IN KENYA

Visiting hams now have a way to get on the air from Kenya. Ted Alleyne, 5Z4NU, the Chairman and Secretary of the Amateur Radio Society of Kenya sdays that that the Communications Commission of Kenya announced on April a new and more relaxed policy towards amateur radio licensing.

Until now it was "practically impossible" for most visitors to obtain an amateur radio license in Kenya. The previous stumbling blocks for reciprocal agreements, Security and Police vetting, have been dropped entirely. However, applicants' countries must have diplomatic relations with Kenya and 5Z4NU says that the ARSK will be happy to supply the new license application forms. (GB2RS)

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WORLDBEAT - GERMANY: PROPAGATION STUDIES WEBSITE UPDATED

Volker Grassmann, DF5AI, says over the VHF Reflector that he recently updated his "Amateur Radio Propagation Studies" web site. Features now include a countdown for the 2004 sporadic E season, a discussion

of thunderstorm effects on the ionosphere, notes on the people behind VHF dxing and much, much more. The page is in cyberspace at www.df5ai.net. Volker says come over and spend some time at the site. (VHF Reflector)

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DX

In D-X, word that GB5JCT is on the air from the fishing trawler Jacinta moored in Fleetwood dock in the UK. The trawler is now a museum dedicated to the fishing fleet that used to be based at Fleetwood. Over the Easter weekend the station was heard on 40 metros SSB and locally on 2 meter FM. (GB2RS)

Also, G3TMA, G3KHZ and IZ1CRR will activate a couple of Borneo's Islands on the Air during the next couple of weeks. If you work them QSL via G3KHZ. (GB2RS)

Lastly, GW3UOF will be active portable SV8 from Kavos, Corfu, in the Greek Isles through May 17th. Look for him on CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL as directed on the air. (OPDX)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: HONORING THE MILITARY

And finally this week, ham radio will be honoring those serving in the military. Jim Meachen, ZL2BHF, is here with the details:

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Amateur Radio Military Appreciation Day will be held world-wide on Saturday, May 29th from approximately 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Central U-S time. According to Emery McClendon, KB9IBW, this will be a day-long operation to talk to troops, and associated groups around the globe in appreciation of their service and personal sacrifice.

The main operating location will be from Johnny Appleseed Park and Wizards Memorial Stadium in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, using Emery's KB9IBW call sign. That station will be on from about 4 p.m. Central Daylight Time through the end of the Wizards game.

Planners say that they know of at least 25 military bases and club

stations that will be operating the event. This includes stations in Iraq, Kuwait, and bases around the globe. More information on this event is in cyberspace at www.fortwaneradioclub.org

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Again, the website for more information on Military Appreciation Day is www.fortwaneradioclub.org. (KB9IBW)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB and Australia's Q-News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline @arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

Before we go, this word for listeners who use our 661-296-2407 phone line to get the newscast. That line will be down for about a week or so starting on Friday, May 14th as the phone machine that feeds the newscast undergoes repairs. We should have it back on-line by May 21st if not before. In the meantime, please use any of the other lines you find listed on our website.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Davis, W2JKD, saying 73, see you all at the 2004 Dayton Hamvention and we thank you for listening." Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2004. All rights reserved.